

be started immediately. It was said that a sum of Rs. 63 crore assistance has been received from World Bank for this project. It is already one year after the laying of the foundation stone for the project, but nothing substantial has been achieved so far.

Similarly, nothing has been done to complete the SLBC Project for which the public and the farmers are agitating for years together.

I request the Union Government, thank you, to give necessary help for commissioning funds to complete the works at the earliest.

(iv) Need to Instruct ONGC TO Award Execution to Offshore Platforms to Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., Visakhapatnam to make it viable.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Visakhapatnam) : Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., Visakhapatnam a pioneer shipbuilding yard had diversified its activities into offshore field with active participation of the ONGC. Hindustan Shipyard has executed certain offshore platforms awarded by the ONGC in 1989. Subsequently, no works were allotted to the Shipyard, as a result of which the entire yard is lying idle.

The ONGC has entrusted with execution of two platform to M/s. Mazgon Docks Ltd., Bombay on nomination basis. Even one B-55 platform which was earmarked to Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., initially was tendered on ICB basis. Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., has stood lowest in the ICB, they were deprived of the order by favouring M/s. Mazgon Docks Ltd., Bombay basing on a discount offered by them separately. Thus ignoring the claim on Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. for execution of work by ONGC is a matter for concern. The works done during the past by Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. should have been considered by the ONGC. This could have helped also to a greater extent the Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. to become viable.

It is known fact that both the Centre and the State are considering various measures for restructuring Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. and making it a viable ship building yard. Its viability very much depends on the offshore activities, lest it will be difficult for the yard to survive.

I, therefore, urge upon the Hon. Minister of Petroleum that he should issue instruction to the concerned authorities that the Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., should also be offered execution of platforms immediately.

(v) Need to ensure early commissioning of Doordarshan Kendra at Patna, Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Doordarshan Kendra Patna has been inaugurated but it has not been commissioned so far because arrangements to provide adequate staff could not be made. Though equipments worth Rs. 42 crores have been installed therein, it has not been commissioned so far. The equipments are lying idle and getting rusted. Therefore I urge the Central Government to commission this Doordarshan Kendra at the earliest and also enquire into the reasons of delay.

(vi) Need to make available River water to Punjab based on Riparian Principles

[English]

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA (Patiala) : Punjab is basically an agricultural State and agriculture requires goods irrigation, Punjab is unfortunately denied the full use of its river waters and only one-third of the land is irrigated by canal water. That is why, almost nine lakh tube wells have been installed in the State within a small area. This has very adversely affected the availability of ground water and the level of ground water is rapidly going down. The entire river water flowing in Punjab rivers should be made available to Punjab under the Riparian principles as applicable throughout the country so that more land can be brought under canal irrigation to increase the agricultural production. I request the Union Government to take necessary steps in this regard.

(vii) Need to Draw a Special Plan for Desilting of Rivers in Assam

DR ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Lakhimpur) : Mr Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the plains of Assam surrounded by the hilly terrain of the North-Eastern region are subjected to erosion and recurring floods during rainy season. Due to wanton destruction of forest and other activities including zoom cultivation in the hills, large scale, flow of silt resulted in shallowing of the river beds in almost all the rivers of the Brahmaputra basin consisting of 48 tributaries. It has also resulted in erosion and floods, formation of small islands and change of river course. Due to desposition of infertile silt over cutlivable lands extending upto five feet many areas became unfit for cultivation. In certain areas the

[Dr. Arun Kumar Sarma]

breadth of Brahmaputra widened to the extent of 15 kilometres due to excessive silt desposition.

During the last two decades more than 10 thousand villages including part of the river islands Majuli amounting 10 per cent of the total fertile cultivable land of Assam were engulfed by the river system. Every year there are loss of life, property of several hundred crores including disruption of road and rail communication. The maximum damage done last year resulting in disruption of road communication and breach of embankments could not be repaired yet due to financial stringency in Jonai, Dhemaji, Majuli, Lakhimpur, Sodia, Chabua, Dhakuakhana and Nowboicha areas under my parliamentary constituency.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Ministry of Water Resources to draw a special plan for desiltation fo the river system by way of dredging and to provide additional fund urgently for immediate restoration of the protection bundhs and road comunication before the start of rainy season. the Brahmaputra Board may also be specially advised for prepanng a master plan to deal with the situation by applying remote sensing device and dredging operation

(viii) Need to solve acute scarcity of drinking water in Bonda district, UP.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMSAJEEVAN (Banda) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a large tract of land in district Banda, UP consists of plataues, hillocks and uneven topography. Drinking water is avaiabile at about 150 to 200 feet below the ground level. The drought affected farmers have utilised whatsoever little rain water was left in all ponds etc. by flushing it out with the help of the pump-sets for irrigation purpose. Lakhs of people are at present faced with acute scarcity of safe drinking water and this problem is going to acquire serious dimensions during the coming Summer.

Therefore, the need of the hour is to solve the drinking water problem urgently and for that immediate steps should be taken by the Government. The Government should also provide funds for the pending drinking water schemes. The antiquated rig machines for digging hand-pums should be declared obsolete and more and more hand-pumps should be installed by procuring modern rig machines of greater capacity. In ordder to sovie the drinking water problem the Central Government should release Rs. five crore directly to the District Development Agency of Banda.

(ix) Need to take steps to Revive Sick NTC Mills in U.P. Particularly in Kanpur

[English]

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA (Kanpur) : Sir, there are 11 mills, five in Kanpur itself and the rest in other parts of the State, under the control of NTC (UP) Ltd. These were taken over as sick unit and nationalised by STUNA in 1974 with a view to cater to the needs of poor and middle people.

Since September, 1991, their production activities became standstill due to budgetary cut and now declared under "C" category. In order to revive these mills, the Production Plan was prepared by NITRA under Textile Ministry in 1993. A reference was also made to BIFR regardig the accumulated losses suffered by the subsidiary which opined that unless the accumulated losses were converted to equity or else written off, the net worth of subsidiary cannot become positive within stipulated period

I urge upon the Government to take up immediate steps to revive their sick mills.

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai-North) : Sir, I have been allowed by the hon. Speaker as a standby to raise a matter under Rule 377.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am not aware of it. What is the subject ?

SHRI RAM NAIK : It was regarding keeping INS Vikrant in the Museum.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : All right please speak.

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH (Meerut) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am also a standby. I request you to allow me also.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am allowing him because he had said that the hon. Speaker has allowed him

(x) Need to Preserve INS Vikrant as a Symbol of Patriotism and Nationalism

[English]

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai North) : On 31st January 1997, the grand old lady of the Indian Navy, INS Vikrant was decommissioned from the Indian Navy after thirty-five years of distinguished and meritorious service.